



## southern redbelly dace

*Phoxinus erythrogaster*

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Osteichthyes
Family:	Cypriniformes
Order:	Cyprinidae

### Features

The average southern redbelly dace is 1 1/2 to three inches long. It has a brown-green back, silver-yellow sides, and a yellow, red, or white belly. There are two dark stripes along its sides and a black spot on its tail. The male may have bright red on the belly, lower head, and base of the dorsal fin. Teeth are present in the throat. The scales are very small and the lateral line (sensory organ on the side of the fish) is incomplete.

### Natural History

The southern redbelly dace lives in rocky creeks, which have permanent water flow and a gravel bottom with no silt. It is common in rivers in northeast Iowa and scattered populations are found in northwest Iowa. It eats plants, mud, algae, and plankton. It lives in schools, often associated with the stoneroller and creek chub. It usually is found near the bottom of its water body. It reaches maturity at age one year. Spawning occurs May through July. The female deposits several thousand eggs that stick

to gravel in the water. The southern redbelly dace has an average life span of two years.

### Habitats

interior rivers and streams; Mississippi River

### Iowa Status

common; native

### Iowa Range

northeast and northwest Iowa

### Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.  
*Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats* CD-ROM.